

June 19, 2000

16,901 Unrenowned; 11 Unheralded; 2 Prominent

Murders & Hate-Crimes Murders

In 1998, the latest year for which complete information is available, 16,914 murders were committed in the United States, an average of 46 murders *every day*.

Thirteen of those 16,914 murders (77 thousandths of one percent) were counted as hate crimes in the Federal Government's hate-crimes book. A hate crime "manifests evidence of prejudice based on" race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or disability.

Two of the victims of reported hate crimes were James Byrd, Jr. and Matthew Shepard. Their stories are well known. **The 11 other victims of reported hate-crimes murders are unheralded. We doubt you have heard their names. And, the 16,901 victims of "commonplace murder" are virtual ciphers in the national consciousness.**

Can it be possible that the 13 hate-crimes murders pose a special threat to American values that the 16,901 other murders don't? That is the premise of the Kennedy amendment which the Senate will vote on tomorrow.

If hate crimes do pose a special threat, how can it be possible that we have never heard of 11 of these 13 horrible crimes?

We have researched each of the 13 hate-crimes murders. A summary of our findings is printed on the back. We were especially interested in the 11 unheralded victims. Like the advocates of the hate-crimes amendment, we did not concern ourselves with the other 16,901.

The 13 victims were all men, as were the 22 murderers. Time and again, drugs and alcohol were key factors in the crimes. Five murders were attributed to prejudice against non-Hispanic whites; four were attributed to prejudice against homosexuals; three were attributed to prejudice against blacks; and one murder was attributed to prejudice against Hispanics.

Thousands and thousands of news stories ran on the James Byrd and Matthew Shepard murders, but in a majority of the other cases the Lexis-Nexis data base shows almost *no* news coverage. In eight of the 13 cases, *not even one* story appeared in an out-of-state newspaper.

If hate crimes are such a threat to American values, how can hate-crimes murders go unreported? Is the press neglecting its duty (and a sensational opportunity to sell newspapers)? Or, is the threat of hate crimes being vastly inflated? In pondering that question, remember these numbers: 16,901 unrenowned; eleven unheralded; two prominent.

Hate-Crimes Murders, 1998, and Notoriety

<u>Murder, by State & date; Name & Race of Victim</u>	<u>Race/ Ethnicity of Perpetrator/s</u>	<u>Reported Prejudice</u>	<u>Lexis-Nexis "Hits" 1998- Present</u>	<u>Story ran in Out-of-state newspaper?</u>
Arkansas, 11/17/98 James Boyd Ward; black	white	anti- homosexual	1	no
California, 3/12/98 Brian Wilmes; white	white	anti- homosexual	70	yes
California, 7/4/98 Russell Craig Lebard; white	black	anti-white	3	no
Florida, 5/25/98 Denzil Jeffrey Amburgey; white	black	anti-white	6	no
Florida, 4/27/98 Steven Goedereis; white	2 whites	anti- homosexual	79	yes
Idaho, 4/17/98 John Alfred Williams; black (prisoner)	Hispanic	anti-black	9	no
Nevada, 1/13/98 George Sullivan; white (police officer)	Tongan	anti-white	85	yes
New York, 8/31/98 name unknown; white	black	anti-white	zero	no
Ohio, 12/2/98 Randy Holman; white	3 blacks	anti-white	zero	no
Texas, 1/18/98 Rafael Enriquez Alvarado; Hispanic	2 Hispanics; 1 black	anti-Hispanic	3	no
Texas, 10/18/98 Zacchaeus Field; black	2 whites	anti-black	zero	no
Texas, 6/7/98 James Byrd; black	3 whites	anti-black	6,000+	yes
Wyoming, Matthew Shepard; white	2 whites	anti- homosexual	9,000+	yes

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